Architecture and Naturing Affairs

24–25 Jan 2020

24 Jan, Friday

ETH Höngg ———— HIB Open Space 2

09.45   **Welcome (Ludger Hovestadt)**

10.00   **Introduction (Mihye An)**

Part I. BREEDING

Moderated by Adil Bokhari

10.30   **knowbotiq**

11.30   **Helen Palmer**

———— lunch break ————

Part II. BREATHING

Moderated by Diana Alvarez-Marin

14.00   **Christina Jauernik**

15.00   **Shintaro Miyazaki**

———— coffee break ————

16.15   **Riccardo M. Villa**

17.15   **Ludger Hovestadt**

25 Jan, Saturday

ETH Höngg ———— HIB Open Space 2

Part III. INHABITING

Moderated by Alice_ch3e81 (Miro Roman)

11.00   **Katja Novitskova**

12.00   **Jorge Orozco**

———— lunch break (sandwiches) ————

14.00   **Yngve Holen**

15.00   **Valle Medina,
Benjamin Reynolds (Pa.LaC.E)**

———— apéro ————

I. BREEDING

knowbotiq

Swiss Psychotropic Gold encountering and refining

focuses on the moments when gold loses its stable form, in moments of dissipation and dispersion, when its materiality is transformed into other states that we subsume under its derivative, psychotropic and molecular agencies. In order to go beyond 'gold' and trace its different materialities, we follow its derivatives. Leaving the river, spilling over in different directions, in uncontrollable flows and streams. Derivatives contain bodies, flesh involved in gold production and usage—from exploitative labor, poisoned environments to gold as object of desire. What is the spillover that is channeled to refineries on the Swiss borders where it is mixed, melted, and neutralized to the extent that its different origins are not traceable anymore?

The derivatives of gold might give way to a different sociality. But how does gold—in violent acts of extraction as well as in its dimensions of cleanliness and in providing moral superiority act as a dividing and transformative force of world-making?

Liberated from their histories, molecules of gold transform from violence into virtuality, into Swissness. The molecular implies knotted trajectories and transversal relations, allowing for divisions and re-aggregations that run counter to hegemonic categories. Matter and molecules are not political per se. It is not via the contraction and downscaling of systems, hierarchies and totalities to the molecular

level that we arrive at its political meaning. Molecules have to be enacted as part of the historical and the social.

Entering the *Psychotropic Refinery*—your techno-libidinous bodies have become molecular bodies through which psychotropic substances, hormones and desires enter and disperse. Gold driven by logistical protocols and immediated by ghosts turns into a stabilizer and tranquilizer, a security, an energizer, an aesthetic part-taking:

Psychotropic Refinery—encountering a sociality of reciprocal indebtedness dispersed in space and time.

knowbotiq with nina bandi 2019

knowbotiq (Yvonne Wilhelm, Christian Huebler) has been experimenting with forms and medialities of knowledge, political representations and epistemic disobedience. In recent projects they are investigating and enacting political landscapes and inhuman geographies with the focus on algorithmic governmentalities, libidinous economies and postcolonial violence. In various installations, interventions and performative settings knowbotiq are exploring molecular, psychotropic and derivative aesthetics. knowbotiq is currently doing research on translocal latent knowledges at IFCAR Institute for Contemporary Art Research and are professors in the MA in Fine Arts at Zurich University of the Arts. Forthcoming Publication with Nina Bandi: *Swiss Psychotropic Gold*, CMV 2020. knowbotiq.net

Nina Bandi is a political philosopher. Based in Zurich and Vienna, she works on questions of non-/representation and the relation between bodies, technology, and materiality from a feminist and postcolonial perspective.

Helen Palmer

Ineluctable Diffractability of the Multisensory Manifold: towards a topology of the senses

Building on comments from various scholars about the rich potential for new materialist scholarship within the realm of the sensory, I draw together topology (the mathematical study of spatial properties preserved under continuous deformation) with synaesthesia (the perceptual phenomenon in which stimulation of one cognitive pathway leads to automatic experiences in another). These phenomena are linked through a shared goal to displace Western Enlightenment ocularcentrism in favour of intra-sensory entanglements. This paper traces some of the onto-epistemological strands of topological embodiment, from Jacques Lacan's conception of the structure of human subjectivity as a topological space in the later *Seminars* to Michel Serres' passionate harlequinesque corporeal tailoring in *The Five Senses* to Elizabeth Grosz' feminist critique of

the Möbius strip, and several additional feminist developments and manifestations of the figure of the cortical homunculus. These various strands are explored speculatively in this paper via a writing journey based on a series of alternative taxonomies segmenting our sensory existence: a hormone symphony, a new theorisation of the vowel space after Rimbaud, a speculative taxonomy of musical intervals in the diatonic scale, and a meditation on sirens and organs based in Blackpool, north-west England.

Helen Palmer is a senior lecturer in English Literature and Creative Writing at Kingston University London. She is the author of *Deleuze and Futurism: A Manifesto for Nonsense* (Bloomsbury 2014) and *Queer Defamiliarisation: Writing, Mattering, Making Strange* (forthcoming July 2020 with Edinburgh University Press). She has recently published work on speculative taxonomies, queer clowning, Gilles Deleuze and *Alice in Wonderland*, and some poetry in the *Minnesota Review*. She is currently writing a novel called *Pleasure Beach* which is a queer feminist reimagining of James Joyce's *Ulysses* set in Blackpool, north-west England.

II. BREATHING

Christina Jauernik

Come Close

Stand and face me, dear; release
That fineness in your irises.

May you bed down,
Head to breast, upon
The flesh
Of a plush
Companion.

   Sappho, "Come Close"[1]

Christina Jauernik studied contemporary dance at HdK Amsterdam, choreography/visual arts practices at Dartington, UK, art and architecture at Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and UdK Berlin. She is Senior Scientist at the Institute for Art and Architecture where she is completing her PhD. Since 2012 collaborations with Wolfgang Tschapeller, among others "Hands have no tears to flow" Austrian Pavilion/Venice Biennale, Fine Arts Library Cornell University, exhibition "OSIRIS – World 1" ORIS House of Architecture Zagreb, lecture series "What beings are we?", artistic research "INTRA SPACE" Academy of Fine Arts. She is co-curating the exhibition "Counter-Archives of Amnesia" with Marina Grzinic at Weltmuseum Wien.

Come close will introduce a series of exercises on mediated intimacy between virtual, engineered, machinic and other beings. As primary text for this shared physical practice serves the archive of material generated during a two-year artistic research project (Tschapeller, INTRA SPACE, 2017). This technical infrastructure, that allowed for the meeting of human and engineered beings in a real-time setting, is revisited as instrument for exercising other modes of perception—ones of multiple eyes, shared and shifted senses/sensors and unfamiliar timings—and for discussing forms of positionality, presence and attention.

Her unresponsive skeleton, erasing conventional movements and giving rise to her own unique irritated language.[2]

A speculation about a mode of perception that can be practiced, shared and communicated and thereby becomes translatable to other spaces, bodies and sites. As performing exercises in becoming-of-a-body in the mutual splitting of bodies and points of view. As screenings of flicker, tracing and inscribing loss in order to furnish, to migrate, to corrupt, to estrange. As listening to the simultaneity and plurality of narratives, bodies and their exposure (*außer-sich-sein*). A coming close without touch, a distant contact that is intimate because of its cultivation and care for something that is created through a sentient precision of closeness, a receptiveness that is shared.

Then, a cloud passing by the sun throws a shadow on the floor. The environment can interpolate itself (*dazwischenfahren*) at any moment. Time lapse. Re-reading, the system tries to hook up. Co-creation. We begin to dwell in the in-between. It is the invisible friction between caring for each other's spheres and wearing and carrying each other, as if we would share a coat.

Come closer. A lens to construct and to look after, to care for a relationship of embodied, situated knowledges—for practicing otherness.

1   Sappho, "Come Close", In *Come Close*, London: Penguin Classics, No. 74. Penguin Random House, 2015, p. 21, translated by Aaron Poochigian in *Stung with Love: Poems and Fragments*, published in 2009.
2   Esther Balfe, "Body of Landscape", In Towards an INTRA SPACE, Tschapeller, Jauernik (eds.). Sternberg Press, 2020

Shintaro Miyazaki

Counter-Dancing "the" Future as Architecting

Inspired by the term *architecting*[1] mostly meant as designing-software-architectures my lecture proposes to take this term back from the world of optimized, efficiency-driven, profit-oriented software/system design, architecture and urbanism to a more commonist, solidarity-oriented, inclusive, participatory, critical and anti-capitalist way of architectural articulation, planning, controlling and automation. The lecture at the same time argues for the need of re-imagining future usages, scenario, dreams and utopias of our urban life, thereby propose a rather fresh theoretical framework I call counter-dancing or counter-raving as an activity accompanying architecting in order to also take back our future from the inhuman designs and plans of the powerful. The lecture focuses especially on the field of smart and intelligent cities, infrastructures and logistics, where planning, governing, modelling and computing are rhythmized and artificulated on urban scales.

Referring on the concept of *code/space*[2] by human geographers Rob Kitchin and Martin Dodge I will update my theory of *algorhythmics*[3] and fuse it with *architecting*, also inspired by utopist architects like Hannes Meyer—the 2nd Bauhaus director—and more concepts from philosophers, authors and scholars such as Walter Benjamin, Donna Haraway, Franco Bifo Berardi, Felix Guattari, Wendy Chun, Jodi Dean, David Graeber or Mckenzie Wark. Another source of inspiration for counter-dancing "the" future as architecting are more recent grassroots movements such as "commoning", the various protest movements emerging globally (Chile, Hong Kong, Irag, Lebanon) in autumn/winter of 2019 and the concrete activities of various individual or collectively organized architect-citizen-artists such as raumlaborberlin, Assemble, Forensic Architecture, Öffentliche Gestaltungberatung (Jesko Fezer) and many more.

Shintaro Miyazaki is a Senior Researcher at the Critical Media Lab Basel, Academy of Art and Design FHNW. He studied media studies, philosophy, and musicology in Basel and Berlin where in 2012 he received a PhD in media studies (about the history of digital technologies focusing on algorithms and their rhythms by coining the term algorhythmics). Since about six years he is on an extended field trip in humanities-driven, experimental media design research and interested in how we can generate moments of criticality which could emancipate us from our self-imposed ignorance of the algorithmic infrastructures we are captured by.

1   See also Molly Wright Steenson, *Architectural Intelligence: How Designers and Architects Created the Digital Landscape* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017).
2   Rob Kitchin and Martin Dodge, *Code/Space: Software and Everyday Life* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011).
3   Shintaro Miyazaki, "Algorhythmics: A Diffractive Approach for Understanding Computation," in *The Routledge Companion to Media Studies and Digital Humanities,* ed. Jentery Sayers (Routledge, 2018), 243–49.

Riccardo M. Villa

Imaginal Gardening. On the Life of Suspended Images.

Whereas today commerce and finance occupy a forefront position and often direct politics on a global as much as on a local scale, this has not been always the case. In antiquity, the figure of the merchant was rather expelled from the city. Both Plato and Aristotle, for instance, condemned financial speculation, for at least two reasons: first, its potentially endless process would threaten the fulfilment of the needs of the city and, instead of containing them, it would open them up to a dangerous indeterminacy. Furthermore, speculation itself was considered an "unnatural" kind of production, since *interests* (its 'products') would not represent any necessity nor truth. Such condemnation constitutes the bases for the clash between *technical* products and natural givens that runs as a thread throughout the whole history of Western thought until the present day. But what if we think of speculation and of its products in architectonic terms? Can we perhaps conceive of interests in analogy to architectural *projects*—as images with an own autonomy, that are not merely mimetic nor functional but are nevertheless *real*, in which nature and technics are not seen as opposed but rather put in communication with each other? Under this light, both the architectural project and the financial interest can be looked at as special kind of 'beings' that are not yet specific, but also not generic. Instead of merely technical products, we can conceive of them as imaginary capitals: figures in which any function, direction or destination is not abrogated but 'suspended' (*Aufgehoben*). Like in a garden, such 'species' would find themselves in-between nature and artifice; in a suspended condition that withholds itself from the imposition of any function or truth, but that at the same time does not get lost into indeterminacy. Through such "imaginal" gardening, reality is here nor naturalistically depicted nor fictitiously mystified, but rather articulated in its material 'breath'.

Riccardo M. Villa is an architect and theoretician. He is Research Assistant and PhD candidate at the Department Architecture Theory and Philosophy of Technology, TU Vienna. His interests revolve around architecture in its production, under a spectrum of investigation that spans from aesthetics and semiotics to bio-politics; his current research focuses on images, ideology, and ideography in the digital age.

Ludger Hovestadt

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, COGITO, AND ARCHITECTONICS

COMPUTERS are a THREAT
ARCHITECTURE forms the ANSWER

computers show there POWER in form of global URBANIZATION.
the global DYSTROPIC RHETORICS says, that we cannot afford it.
which obviously doesn't matter
and opens door to an overwhelming PRODUCTION OF ARTEFACTS
EATING ALL CULTURES in the generic.

it is time for ARCHITECTURE to understand the MECHANICS,
to affirm power and give this power a FACE.
it is time to give the forms of power a FORUM.
it is time to rethink the CITY
and start navigating our planet with CONSCIOUSNESS.

Since 2000 Ludger Hovestadt is Professor for Computer Aided Architectural Design at the ETH Zürich, Switzerland, and is directing a permanent research group of 16 PhD students. His interest is in artificial intelligence and not in computer graphics. He founded several companies in the fields of smart geometry, building intelligence, building information models and the internet of things. Since 2008 his focus shifted from applications to the principles of computing in architecture. In 2010 he cofounded the Laboratory for Applied Virtuality with Vera Bühlmann, which edits the applied virtuality book series (Birkhäuser, since 2010). He has published several books on architecture, computing, philosophy, and mathematics.

III. INHABITING

Katja Novitskova

Patterns of activation

Human attention is material process that runs on energy and is enabled by the biological infrastructure of our eyes and brains. Although deeply subjective, it is also a culturally and socially driven phenomenon that is constantly shifting from one thing to another. With the rise of the Internet and social media, the industries that specialise in triggering and capturing human attention through media content have been growing exponentially. The attention they capture can be measured; and so through a long chain of material translations (from our own bodies to electricity for server farms) we can see how the content that we choose to engage with online literally pushes for more fossil fuels to be burned and minerals to be extracted from the depths of the Earth.

It can be claimed that art is a unique way of capturing human attention by creating a model, a novel approximation, of something that exists in the world or has a potential to exist. A drawing of a deer on a cave wall is an abstraction of animal's form, and the lines themselves are a pattern that activates our attention, recognition and emotion. Perhaps for evolutionary reasons, art history and Internet are full of animal patterns and footage. Increasingly with some species, there might be more images of them in existence than actual animals.

From an artistic perspective, the quantification of attention presents an interesting question for art making: to 'click bait' or not, and if yes, then how? We can think of aesthetics as a kind of logic behind the creation of specifically activating patterns. Additionally with the rise of machine vision, the concept of attention has expanded towards a new form of algorithmic seeing.

This talk will focus on the ecology and technology of attention through the practice of a contemporary artist.

Katja Novitskova (EE, 1984) is a visual artist working in variety of media, from books to installations. She lives in Amsterdam and Berlin. Her work explores the ecological dimension of visual information technologies: from attention economies to machine vision. She studied semiotics at the University of Tartu in Estonia and graphic design at Sandberg Instituut, Netherlands. In 2011, she published her first artist book and curatorial project 'Post Internet Survival Guide'. Since then her work has been exhibited globally: at The Museum of Modern Art in New York, Estonian pavilion at 57th Venice Biennale, 9th Berlin Biennale and many others.

Jorge Orozco

PANORAMAS OF CINEMA

Panoramas of Cinema explores the qualification of spaces in architecture by implementing machine intelligence on a private vidéothèque.

Movies are alive and talking to us from many times and spaces. The availability of online videos in large quantities, coupled with the computer code to deal with them all at once, presents a novel scenario for architecture to explore. This research investigates this scenario by operating millions of clips, frames and dialogues extracted from a vidéothèque so to automatically construct personal and vivid panoramas. The capacity of these panoramas to qualify architectural spaces in different media, and their relation to established modeling and design techniques, is at the core of this research. This talk will present the advancements of this work—the custom-made instrument to deal with movies and the architectural talks by the author and by students of ETH Zurich's Department of Architecture.

Jorge Orozco is a researcher and lecturer at the Chair for Digital Architectonics in the ETH Zurich's Department of Architecture, from which he obtained his Dr. Sc. degree.

Jorge likes being connected. He's fascinated by the new abilities that traditional objects—like a picture, a book, or a movie—gain when they're online and leveraged by computer code that deals with these objects in large quantities. He likes to code and write on this novel phenomenon and on the challenges and fictions that it presents to tradition.

Yngve Holen

Communicating with the Brain in Its Own Language

Yngve Holen works with and combines materials and technologies that define today's industries and our everyday surroundings. Consisting of sculpture and research-based publishing, Holen's work explores replaceability, boundaries, and the human body's imbrications in the culture of consumption. Holen mixes traditional materials such as metal, marble, glass, and wood with more recent industrial techniques like 3D printing, water jet cutting, and spare parts. The work is informed by diverse fields such as transportation and industrial food production, plastic surgery and security systems. It interrogates not only the appearance of today's industries in our daily lives, but also the human body's relationship to them and its own subjectivity.

Yngve Holen is a Norwegian/German sculptor who lives and works in Berlin, DE, and Oslo, NO. Holen is the recipient of international acclaim, including the Robert-Jacobsen-Prize (2017) and ars viva (2015). His work has been the subject of large-scale institutional solo exhibitions, such as HEINZERLING, Kunstnernes Hus, Oslo (2019), HORSES, Kunsthalle Düsseldorf (2018), and VERTICALSEAT, Kunsthalle Basel (2016).

Valle Medina and Benjamin Reynolds (Pa.LaC.E)

OPTI-LAX

We will present a set of four sequential directions whose purpose is to undermine that of the previous direction. The point will not be to evaluate this serpentine 'sense', or vector, but rather to exhaust the work that we understand as 'conceits', or drawn-out, turns of images. We will elaborate on personalized notions that led the production of architectural projects as sites of human drama, for instance: extracts of the conditions of a single contour-line along the sub-alpine peak "Culan" in eastern Switzerland is employed in the construction of an inclusive space that replicates a state of hypoxia and contributes to a cultural imagination linked to medical climatology and the figure of the hotel; or the way our patterns of wakefulness, sleep and work have been "pulverized" and have led us to articulate the building "Paris Hermitage" as a large temporal oscillator where citizens go to restore their rhythms; in "Zenith Boil" a new body of architectural spaces are compiled with fifty "air captures" by means of an elaborate photographic process aided by a large-diameter telescopic mirror and astronomical software in order to reveal how turbulence and laminarity alter the space's depiction; a large ceiling frieze imagined from a space no longer existing and with no surviving documentation is constructed as a strategy of comprehension, resulting in a 300 kg fragment of the Melgroube, a public building for trading European flour on the Neuer Markt, Vienna from the 14th Century.

Valle Medina and Benjamin Reynolds are co-founders of Pa.LaC.E, based between Basel and London. They have been art fellows at the Van Eyck Academie, NL. They won the 50th annual Shinkenchiku/Central Glass Award in Tokyo, among other international prizes. Their work has been published and shown internationally, notably at the ICA (UK), Van Abbemuseum (NL), the Centre of Contemporary Culture of Barcelona (CCCB, ES), the Boston Centre for the Arts (US) and Basis voor Actuele Kunst – BAK (NL).

Benjamin Reynolds received a diploma with honours from the Architectural Association, London. Valle Medina is a graduate from the Laboratory for Applied Virtuality at ETH Zürich D-ARCH (summa cum laude). They have been leading the studio "Dom Gross" (www.domgross.com) at the Vienna University of Technology and are currently directing the group 'High Holdings' at the Royal College of Arts, London (www.ho.ldin.gs). Their first major monograph—Paris Hermitage—was published in late 2016 with Cooperative Editions (New York).

Is architecture evermore concerned with coexisting with the world of diverse materialities and agencies, by communicating with our inner world? This symposium aims to evoke architectonic sensitivities on the basic level, in particular, on the level of infrastructural technics and speculative activities. Accordingly, through the idea of *Naturing Affairs*, various ways of grounding, ordering, living, transcending, articulating one's condition in relation to Nature are questioned. An enthralling dialogue between architects, artists, and theorists initiated.

ETH *zürich*

D**ARCH**

Departement Architektur

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Institute of Technology in Architecture
Faculty of Architecture / ETH Zurich

prof ludger hovestadt
digital architectonics